



Department of Corrections

Commissioner: Thomas Patterson

Divisions & Programs: Institutional Operations
Adult Probation and Parole
Programming
Correctional Industries
Clinical Services
Facilities
Finance
Training
Planning and Research
Internal Audit
Law Enforcement



Full Time Employees: 2,342

Contact Information: <http://corrections.utah.gov/>
(801) 545-5500

Mission Statement: Our team of professionals is dedicated to ensuring safe communities in Utah by incarcerating and supervising those who violate our laws. Further, our team is devoted to provide maximum opportunities for offenders to make lasting changes in their behavior through treatment and programming.

Emerging Issues and Strategic Focus:

Prisons are vital for protecting the public from those who violate our laws. Crowded facilities endanger both staff and inmates. Our 10-year plan requires additional prison capacity that will need to be funded in the 2008 Legislative Session.

Utah's correctional system faces a number of challenges in its efforts to protect the public and assist offenders in becoming law abiding citizens. Public demands for strict sentences and tight supervision of offenders conflict with the need to control public spending on Corrections. The nature of Corrections work requires a high level of dedication to the job and a willingness to face difficult and unpleasant situations—combine this with low pay and the result is a high rate of staff turnover and vacancies. We also face struggles of retention and recruitment in auxiliary areas such as training, finance, and medical.

Programs to address the root causes of offender criminal behavior such as lack of education or job skills can be effective; however, lack of resources limit program availability. Providing quality substance abuse treatment in a timely manner fosters public safety by decreasing the tendency for offenders to re-offend. The Drug Offender Reform Act (DORA), managed through our Programming Division, will provide offenders additional substance abuse treatment opportunities.

The Department transports over 1,000 inmates every year for medical services, court hearings, and prison population movement from different sites and county jails. Due to tragic events in the summer of 2007, it became evident that the Department needs to change its policy and practice related to the transportation of inmates.

Cost efficiencies have been maximized with our Clinical Services Bureau, but the Department has to request budgetary supplementals in order to fill budget shortfalls related to medical services. The growth in the prison population and inflation in medical expenses has led to an on-going funding shortfall in its medical services system.

The State currently has two primary prison sites, other than locations contracted for beds in county jails. In looking at the Department's 10-year plan, the State of Utah needs to begin examining potential locations for a third prison site. The Gunnison site can accommodate ten additional buildings. However, there will not be a sufficient population base in the area to support these buildings when they are needed. The State currently occupies less than half of the available land at the Bluffdale prison site. Cost efficiencies may be realized in building at this site as utilities are already available, and there is a sufficient population base to support additional prison beds at this location.



Governance:

- Provide maximum opportunities for offenders to succeed in the community through proven rehabilitation programs
- Develop two new housing units at Gunnison and a 300-bed privatized parole violator center
- Look for innovative ways to recruit and retain qualified correctional officers
- Re-engineer of Utah's sex offender registry in conjunction with the Adam Walsh Act
- Investigate the feasibility of indexing the current medical budget to Medicaid
- Find ways of providing a minimum of two officers for all transports
- Study the feasibility and impacts of developing new or expanding existing facilities